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WHITE HOUSE SUPPORT STAFF

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JAPANESE WHALING ACTIVITIES

Japanese whaling activities may become a political issue with the US. Tokyo's refusal to comply with international agreements to restrict whaling may result in application of the Pelley Amendment by the US. This could result in a total ban on US importation of Japanese fish products, which earned the Japanese about \$230 million last year.

The position of the Japanese Government has remained firm, despite considerable international criticism generated by conservation groups. Whale meat is an important and relatively cheap source of protein in Japan. A boycott organized by groups in the US has already had an impact on sales of Japanese food imports.

Some Japanese officials fear that the whaling problem, along with other bilateral fisheries problems, especially the

salmon dispute, will generate strong pressure in Congress for action against Japan. The issue may come to ahead following next month's meeting in London of the Internaitonal Whaling Conference.